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SHAPING ILLINOIS' WORKFORCE

WHAT CAN YOUR COMPANY DO?

ILLINOIS DOCUMENTS
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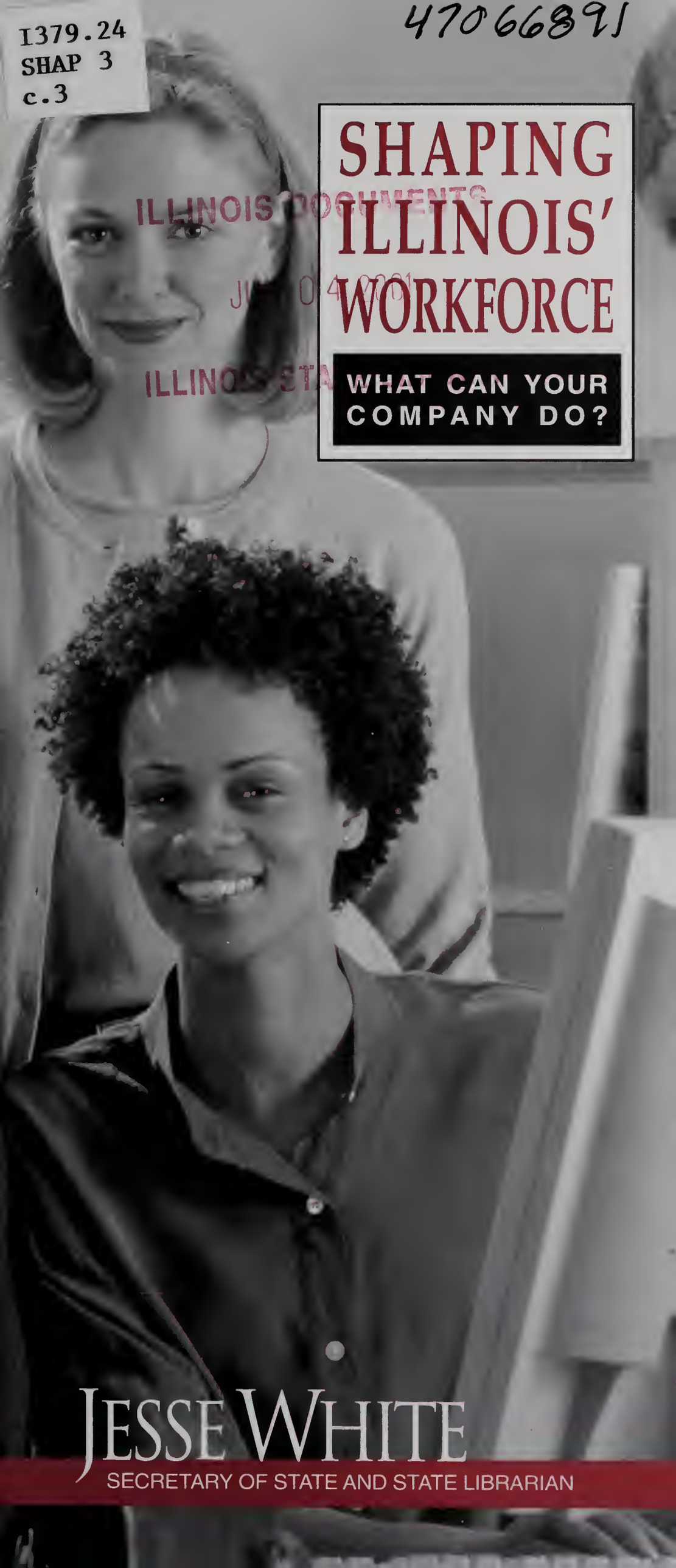
ILLINOIS STATE



JESSE WHITE
SECRETARY OF STATE AND STATE LIBRARIAN

The challenge

Because many workers lack necessary basic skills, companies experience ...

- A decrease in productivity and efficiency in the workplace.
- A reduction in the pool of skilled and promotable workers.
- Difficulty incorporating new technologies because workers cannot understand training manuals.
- An increase in accidents.

Low-level readers experience difficulty ...

- Filling out job applications.
- Reading employee training manuals.
- Understanding safety signs in the workplace.
- Applying for promotions that require reading or writing skills.

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How you can help

Businesses throughout Illinois are working to close the gap between employee skills and workplace needs. Here are some ways you and your company can become involved.

- **Introduce your employees to existing educational options.**

  Arrange for a local literacy provider to speak confidentially to employees about existing basic skills programs.

- **Provide on-site basic skills classes.**

  Your local literacy provider can help in developing a comprehensive, individualized and confidential basic skills program at your worksite.

- **Encourage company executives, employees and their families to serve as volunteers in community literacy programs.**

  Contact your local literacy program to volunteer. Call (800) 321-9511 for a program in your area.

- **Provide in-kind assistance to local programs.**

  Programs need classroom space, office equipment, assistance with design and printing of instructional and publicity materials, and services such as data processing and accounting.

- **Provide financial support to local literacy programs in communities where you do business.**

  The Secretary of State Literacy Office can help identify programs that need your assistance to expand and improve their services.

- **Speak up!**

  As a civic leader, you can inform the community about the need for literacy programs and the availability of local programs and services.

  Offer to serve on your local literacy council.

A commitment to literacy

With the 21st century upon us, more Illinoisans are working than ever before. Our economy remains strong, and we are poised for the technological challenges of the future.

Illinois businesses can keep pace with the ever-changing global economy by supporting and promoting lifelong learning. Businesses are in a unique position to support lifelong learning in their organizations as well as in their communities. This brochure provides information on how your business can lead by example in promoting lifelong learning.

Your involvement can make an enormous impact at the local, state, national and global levels. Take time to read this brochure and discover what you can do to ensure a strong workforce and community base now and for generations to come.

Jesse White

JESSE WHITE
Secretary of State
and State Librarian

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The Secretary of State Literacy Office serves as a clearinghouse for information on employee basic skills programs.

Contact us about:

- The Secretary of State Workplace Skills Enhancement Grant Program.
- The Secretary of State Making Work Pay Grant Program.
- Referrals to local literacy providers.
- Help in getting basic skills programs started in your business.
- Other ways we can work together to close the basic skills gap in Illinois.

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